

Mat Janin.*

The tale is told that once upon a time there was a man called Sēmordan, who lived in a coconut plantation that he had made, and, thanks to God, he lived at his ease, he and his children eating of the foison of his plantation.

Now one day he was walking with his children in the garden and he saw that many of the nuts were ripe. Just at that time Sēmordan met a man who was a past master in the art of climbing coconuts and whose name was Mat Janin. Sēmordan said to him, "Hai Mat Janin, do you want to earn wages by climbing coconuts?"

Mat Janin said, "If the pay is right I would like it. What do you want to pay a tree?"

Semordan answered, "Two nuts, and the number of the trees is about twenty five."

Mat Janin said, "Very well then."

So he began to climb one of the coconuts, and while he was half way up he began to think on this wise: "I am going to climb these twenty five trees, that means fifty nuts. Now I can sell those nuts for a cent apiece, that means half a dollar. Then I shall buy some cheap nuts and I shall get sixty. Then I will boil them and extract the oil. After that I will sell the oil and get ten cents profit. That is my money has become seven times ten cents. After that I will buy fowls, one cock and one hen, for thirty cents the pair of them. That leaves forty cents. Then I can buy ten gantangs of rice for their food. That will be fifteen cents and will leave me a quarter of a dollar. That will do for my expenses in taking care of the fowls. In time the fowl will lay eggs and hatch chickens. I will take care of those chickens too. Then in time they too will hatch other chickens. And the mother

* A short tale by Penghulu Mohamed Noordin bin Jaffar of Kota Stia Lower Perak. No special source can be assigned. The moral is the old one: do not count your chicken before they are hatched.

will also still be laying. So my fowls will become many in number. Then I will sell them all. After that I will buy ducks. And rice too for their food. In time they will hatch ducklings. Again after a time those young ducks in their turn will hatch other ducklings, and the old ones will still be laying. So I will have a lot of ducks. They will go upstream and they will go downstream all quacking, 'ka ka.' Then people will say, 'Whose ducks are those?' and others will answer, 'Those are Mat Janin's' and in response the others will say, 'Mat Janin seems to be rich.'

Then I will sell the whole of my ducks and will buy two she-goats and one he goat. In time they will have kids, and those kids when they grow will get other kids, and the others will not be sterile. So that in time I will have many goats and they will wander up stream and down stream, people will say, 'Whose goats are these?' and others will answer, 'Those are Mat Janin's goats.'

Then I will sell all those goats and I will buy a buffalo bull and a buffalo cow. In time they will get calves and those calves will after a time get other calves of their own and the mother will still go on bearing. So I will get a lot of buffaloes. They will wander up stream and down stream and they will low 'wa wa' up stream and 'wa wa' down stream. People will say, 'Whose buffaloes are those?' And others will answer, 'Those are Mat Janin's.' And the others will reply, 'Verily this Mat Janin seems to be indeed rich.'

After that I will sell all my buffaloes and I will buy a bull elephant and a cow elephant. In time they will breed and after a farther time their children too will breed and the old mother will go on breeding. So that I will have a lot of elephants.

Then I will sell all those elephants and get a lot of money. After that I will buy a ship complete with her cargo. Then I will go to some other country and there I will marry the daughter of the king of that country, who is very beautiful. I will be very happy there and I will play with my wife and fondle her. At daybreak I will go to the royal hall to play

chess with the king's children. Then when I am busy playing chess the princess will call me to go in. One of her maids will come and say, 'The princess invites my lord to go in and partake of some slight refreshment.' But I will think, 'I don't know whether it is really to partake of some refreshment or whether she wants me to fondle her again. Anyhow I won't worry about her.' A little while after the princess herself will come and will say, 'This fellow was invited to come in but he never paid the slightest attention. Very well we shall see.' Still I will pay no attention to her. In a little while she will come near me. Then the king's son will say, 'Mate.' 'Is that really so? I will say' 'Mate,' says the king's son again. 'Come along and have your food now,' she will say. But I will say, 'Wait a bit, I have been beaten.' While this is going on the princess will dig me in the ribs on the right side but I will twist away to the left. Then she will poke me on the left hand side but I will dodge to the right.'

In the meanwhile Mat Janin was acting this piece of by-play, and failed to notice that his grip of the coconut leaf was loosened. So he fell right down to the ground and was killed outright. Sēmordan was very sorrowful to see the death Mat Janin died.

Mat Janin.

Alkēsah maka adalah pada masa zaman dahulu kala maka ada satu orang nama Sēmordan dudok ia pērbuat satu kebun nyiur, maka disēbabkan Allah, sēanglah ia dudok makan anak bēranak dapat khazanah dēripada kebunnya itu. Maka pada satu hari bērjalanlah ia anak bēranak didalam kebunnya itu, maka ditēngohnya banyak sudah masak buah nyiur-nya itu. Maka pada waktu itu bērjumpalah ini Sēmordan dengan satu orang yang tērlalu biasa dan pandai mēmanjat nyiur, namanya Mat Janin. Maka kata Sēmordan, "Hay Mat Janin, adakah mika mahu mēngambil upah mēmanjat nyiur?" Maka kata

Mat Janin, "Jikalau bëtul-lëtul dëngan upah-nya mahulah tëman. Bërapalah mika hëndak upah didalam satu pokok?" Maka jawab Sëmordan, "Dua biji, dan banyak pokok adalah lëbih kurang didalam dua puloh lima pokok." Maka kata Mat Janin, baiklah. Maka iapun mëmanjatlah satu pokok nyiur itu, maka didalam ia tëngah mëmanjat itu timbullah fikirannya didalam hatinya.

"Aku mëmanjat ini didalam 25 pokok dapatlah aku lima puloh biji, maka aku jual nyiur itu, dëngan harga satu duit sa-biji, dapatlah aku duit lima kupang. Këmudian aku bëlikan pula nyiur yang murah harganya dapat pula ënam puloh biji. Këmudian aku tanak minyak. Këmudian aku jual itu minyak dapatlah aku untong sakupang, sudah jadi duit aku itu tujuh kupang. Këmudian aku bëlikan ayam pula sa'ekor jantan sa'ekor bëtina dëngan harga tiga kupang kaduanya. Tinggal duit aku ampat kupang. Këmudian aku bëlikan padi sapuloh gantang harga tëngah dua kupang, akan makanan ayam ini, dan tinggal duit aku lagi satu suku. Maka jadilah duit ini akan bëlanja aku mëmëlihara itu ayam. Këmudian ini ayam lama-lama ia bërtëlor bëranak. Maka aku bëla juga itu anak lama-lama anak itu pun bëranak dan ma-nya pun bërnak jadi banyaklah ayam aku

Këmudian aku juallah habis-habis. Maka aku bëli pula itëk dan aku bëli pula padi akan makanannya. Lama-lama bëranak pula aku bëla juga. Lama-lama dëngan kalama'an-nya anak pun bëranak, dan ma-nya, pun bëranak, jadi banyaklah itek aku. Bërjalanlah ia ka-hulu dan ka-hilir sërta ia bërbunyi, "Ka-ka." Maka kata orang "Itëk siapa itu?" Maka kata orang yang lain pula, "Itëk Si Mat Janin." Maka kata orang itu, "Kaya sudah rupanya Si Mat Janin itu."

Këmudian aku jual pula ini itek habis-habis, maka aku bëlikan pula kambing dua ekor bëtina dan sa'ekor jantan. Lama-lama dëngan kalama'annya bëranak pula. Maka ini pun bësar lalu ia bëranak dan ma-nya pun bëranak. Lama-lama jadi banyaklah kambing aku bërjalanlah ia ka-hulu ka-hilir, maka kata orang, "Kambing siapakah itu?" Maka kata orang yang lain pula, "Itulah kambing Si Mat Janin."

Këmudian aku jual pula ini kambing habis. Maka aku bëlikan pula kërbaui sa'ekor jantan sa'ekor bëtina. Lama-lama

béranak pula ini kérbau. Maka lama-lama dèngan kalama'an-nya, anak pun béranak dan ma-nya pun béranak, jadi banyaklah kérbau aku. Béjalanlah ia ka-hulu dan ka-hilir sèrta bérbunyi "Wa-wa" ka-hulu, "Wa-wa," ka-hilir. Kata orang, "Kérbau siapa itu?" Maka kata orang yang lain pula, "Itulah kérbau Si Mat Janin." Maka kata orang itu, "Kaya sunggohlah Mat Janin ini rupanya." Kémudian aku jual pula ini bérbau habis, maka aku bélikan pula gajah sa'ekor jantan ka'ekor bétina. Lama-lama béranak pula ini gajah. Lama dèngan kalamalannya anak pun béranak dan ma-nya pun séranak, jadi banyaklah gajah aku.

Maka aku jualkan pula ini gajah habis-habis, maka banyak puluh aku dapat duit. Kémudian aku bélikan pula satu buah kapal chukop dèngan muatannya, maka pèrgilah aku kapada sa'buah nègèri. Kémudian mèmning pula aku kapada anak raja yang didalam nègèri itu yang sangat eloknya. Maka aku pun sangatlah suka hati aku dèngan bèrgumol bèrgalutlah aku dèngan pèrèmpuan aku itu. Apabila siang hari aku pun pèrgi ka-balai bèrmain chator dèngan sègala anak raja-raja. Kémudian tèngh aku main chator, di-panggil oleh tuan putèri aku masok kadalam. Datang sa'orang dayang-dayang mèmanggil itu, katanya, "Tuan di-panggil oleh tuan putèri masok kadalam ia hèndak santap." Fikiran aku pula, èntahkan hèndak santap èntahkan bèrgumol bèrgalot dèngan aku, tiada juga aku fèhdulikan. Sabuntar lagi datanglah pula tuan putèri sèndiri, katanya, "Orang ini kita mèmanggil dia, haram tiada di-fèhdulikannya, baiklah." Maka tiada juga aku hiraukan. Lama-lama datang ia dèkat aku. Maka kata anak raja-raja itu "Mat." Maka "Sah?" pula kata aku. "Mat," kata anak raja-raja pula. Lama-lama, "Marilah kita makan." Maka kata aku, "Nantilah dahulu, aku sudah kalah." Antara begitu di-chuchok tuan putèri pinggang aku di-sablah kanan, aku gelèkkan ka-kiri dan di-chuchoknya di-sablah kiri, aku gelèkkan ka-sablah kanan.

Maka ini Mat Janin tèngh mèlakukan kalakuan yang dèmikian ini, tiada sèdar tangannya tèrlèpas dèripada pèlèpah nyiur itu, lalu jatuh kabawah langsung mati. Maka Sèmordan sangatlah susah hatinya mèlihatkan hal kamatiu Mat Janin itu.